

AIDS TO PUBLIC HEALTH. By Llywelyn Roberts, M.D. (Hyg.), M.R.C.P., D.P.H. Seventh edition. (Pp. 313 + xiv; figs. 5. 7s. 6d.). London: Ballière, Tindall & Cox. 1952.

THE curriculum in Public Health has been greatly expanded in the post-war period, the former courses in legislative Public Health being replaced by courses in the newer and wider discipline of social and preventive medicine; social medicine being concerned with the social environment and heredity in so far as they affect health and well-being, while preventive medicine is more executive in outlook and comprises the design and direction of the measures for the preservation of health and the prevention of disease. In this new philosophy medicine joins forces with ecology and embraces man as a whole, in the cradle, at school, at work and in the home. This philosophy gained considerable expression from the post-war legislation which, by showing an ever-increasing trend towards socio-medical reform, continues to reflect the changing socio-economic structure of this age.

This present edition of the *Aids to Public Health* reflects this increase in maturity of medical thought, but at the same time Dr. Roberts has not forgotten that the improved habits and outlook of the people, the better social and economic conditions, the improvement in health and the changing emphasis on the causes of ill-health all have their basis in the "sanitary idea" of the early Victorians. He demonstrates clearly that the primary need in health must always be environmental—air, ventilation, water-supply, housing, etc., while the secondary need, secondary because it must follow and not precede an appropriate environment, is personal nurture, a nurture which begins nine months before birth and is continued until the end of life.

Dr. Roberts, a Medical Officer of Health of a large industrial city, brings to his authorship the practical experience of the worker in the field of social and preventive medicine, a factor which must recommend this book, not only to the medical undergraduate, but also to the established medical practitioner. The clear arrangement of the text and the plain, straightforward style of this book cannot fail to satisfy the most critical of its readers. J. S.

THE ESSENTIALS OF MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS. By Rt. Hon. Lord Horder, G.C.V.O., M.D., F.R.C.P.(Lond.), and A. E. Gow, M.D., F.R.C.P.(Lond.); revised with the assistance of R. Bodley Scott, M.A., D.M.(Oxon.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.). Second edition. (Pp. xvii + 462; plates 23. 22s. 6d.). London: Cassell. 1952.

THIS is a book which will inevitably have a wide appeal to students and practitioners. It is essentially an account of the clinical approach to medical diagnosis. The main systems of the body are considered in separate sections, and each section is introduced by a brief anatomical and physiological description. This is followed by a good, clear and comprehensive account of the methods of eliciting the physical signs and their interpretation. Finally, in each section there is a somewhat haphazard account of various symptoms and disease processes affecting the particular system. Much of the useful information contained in this section might have been more profitably grouped under a really comprehensive section on history taking to which, otherwise, little space has been devoted.

In a work covering such an extensive field, generalisations are inevitable, but here they are often so wide as to be misleading. Another unsatisfactory feature of this book is the very brief summary of the so-called typical clinical picture of a disease. These descriptions tend to encourage "spot diagnosis," instead of a proper deductive approach.

Despite these defects, the book contains a great deal of useful and practical advice, and a wealth of information on the fundamentals of medical diagnosis. G. M. B.